

1937.



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the

**Urban District (Municipal Borough)
of Romsey**

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Urban District (Municipal Borough) of Romsey.

*To the Mayor and Corporation of the Borough of Romsey, acting as the
Urban Sanitary Authority.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit the Annual Report for 1937.

Section A. Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	1212
Population (as estimated by the Registrar-General)	...			...	5727
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	...	1600
Ratio of population to inhabited houses	...		...	...	3.5
Rateable value	...	...	...	...	£34,380
Sum represented by a penny rate...	...	...	...	...	£129

The District is a small one and although it has been doubled in size, is still one of the smallest of the several Urban Districts.

A brewery, a nursery, mills, a few small factories and two gravel pits give employment to a proportion of the population. The rest of the inhabitants are mostly engaged in retail trade, or in other occupations common to all market towns. It is within easy reach of Southampton and Eastleigh, has good sanitation, lighting and a piped water supply.

The pleasant surroundings and moderately low rents have attracted people working at Eastleigh and Southampton.

VITAL STATISTICS, 1937.

		Male.	Female.	Total.		
Live births.	Legitimate	43	34	77	}	Birth-rate 13.9
	Illegitimate	—	3	3		
Still births	... ..	4	1	5		Rate, 58
Deaths	... ..	39	33	72		Death rate 12.5
Deaths from puerperal causes :—				Deaths.		
	Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	0		
	Other Puerperal Causes		...	0		

Death-rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1000 live births	...	..	...	...	37.5
Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births	...		...	...	0
Illegitimate infants per 1000 illegitimate live births	...		...	...	0
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...		...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2)	...	...	...	...	0
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	11

Of all the causes of death, Heart Disease accounted for 19, other Circulatory Disorders 6, Tuberculosis 4, Violence 6.

There was no excessive mortality from any particular cause. The infantile mortality rate is low.

In dealing with a small population, the rates are naturally very variable in different years, and consequently the variations from year to year are not of much significance.

There was a slight epidemic of Jaundice, chiefly among the children, during the last few months of the year.

The report has to include any evidence statistical or otherwise that unemployment or environment has exercised any significant influence on the health or physique of children or adults.

In order to obtain some idea of the extent of unemployment enquiries were made at an average mixed school, and it was found that 7 per cent. of the parents were unemployed. This is an improvement on last year.

The Head Teacher of one School had no difficulty in obtaining work for leavers, boys and girls.

The provision of Council houses with a good environment has had a significant influence on the health and general condition of the mothers and children.

One Head Teacher, who has worked for many years in Romsey, mentioned that the happier conditions at home have had a good psychological effect on the mothers and children.

The Council were put to considerable expense in providing a very wide road through their estate, but the children have benefited considerably owing to the additional open space becoming available.

Experience of reconditioned houses with limited air space around has shown that they are not suitable for children. Children seem to be particularly sensitive to a limitation of external ventilation.

The cheap milk available in the Schools and the free milk supplied by the County Council to some mothers and children have played an important part in improving the nutrition of some children, though not quite so important a role as in previous years, when housing conditions and the amount of employment were not so good as at present.

My attention was drawn by a Head Teacher to the large number of boys in the two Junior Classes. The proportion of boys to girls in the two Junior Classes in both Schools was about 2 : 1. There is little change in the type of parent as families have lived in the Town for many years and any alteration in the proportion of the boys and girls if continued, would be interesting, though the numbers are too small to draw any definite conclusions.

Section B. General Provision of Health Services.

(1) Public Health Officers of the Authority :—

- (a) The Medical Officer of Health is also Assistant County Medical Officer and Medical Officer of Health of the adjoining Rural District of Romsey and Stockbridge.
- (b) The Sanitary Inspector is also Borough Surveyor.
- (c) A Veterinary Surgeon for the inspection of Dairies, Cowsheds Meat Shops and Slaughter Houses.

(2) Services provided :—

There has been no change in the services provided in the area viz., Laboratory Facilities, Ambulance Facilities, Nursing in the Home, Clinics, Treatment Centres and Hospitals.

Report of the Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

THE TOWN HALL,
ROMSEY, HAMPSHIRE.

February, 1938.

SIR,

I beg to present to you my Annual Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Urban District of Romsey, for the year ended 31st December, 1937.

Section C. Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

WATER.

The area is supplied with a piped supply by the Southampton Corporation from their Waterworks Pumping Station at Timsbury. The quality of the water is good, and the supply is "constant." A few houses in isolated spots still obtain their supply from shallow wells which are liable to contamination.

With few exceptions, all houses are supplied direct from the mains, but instances remain of bib-taps being situated in common yards, and shared by more than one household. The Local Authority are now insisting on a supply of drinking water being readily available in each house, and during the past year 36 houses have had separate supplies laid on.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The drains of all new properties are connected with the Sewerage System, and it is only in exceptional cases that septic tanks are necessary, that is, where the properties are not within reasonable distance of a sewer. The exceptional cases occur mostly in the Added Area of the Borough, but almost the whole of the available land within the Boundaries of the Old Borough is served by a sewer leading to the Pumping Station at Saddlers Mill, from where it is pumped to the Sewage Disposal Works. The Sewerage system is working fairly satisfactorily, and, further to the recommendations made regarding remedial works, careful observation is being kept of the extent of infiltration of subsoil water and the ingress of surface water into the sewers.

During the year under review 91,955,400 gallons of sewage were pumped to the Disposal Works at Greenhill to receive treatment, and no nuisance was reported. The quantity dealt with is equivalent to an average twenty-four hour flow of 251,933 gallons, which is the discharge expected from a population of 12,596 persons at an allowance of twenty gallons per head per day. During the six winter months 57,362,275 gallons were pumped, equal to an average twenty-four hour flow of 315,177 gallons—a discharge expected from a population of 15,758 persons, and during the six summer months

34,593,125 gallons were pumped, equal to an average twenty-four hour flow of 189,033 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 9,451 persons, allowing in both instances 20 gallons per head per day.

The amount of rainfall for the year registered at the Disposal Works was 37.28, 26.40 of which fell in the winter months and 10.88 in the summer months.

Summarised the figures for 1937 and the preceding year are as follows:—

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Sewage pumped. Gallons.</i>	<i>Average daily flow.</i>	<i>Expected from a population of</i>	<i>Rainfal inches.</i>
1937	91,955,400	251,933	12,596	37.28
1936	83,244,375	227,389	11,369	34.571

RIVERS AND STREAMS.

There is now very little pollution of the streams passing through the area. Warnings have been given to persons against depositing refuse into the waterways. Notices are erected at certain points prohibiting such practice. Owing to heavy rainfall during the first two months of the year flooding, similar to that occurrence about the same time twelve months previously, was experienced in the Greatbridge Road Area. Little inconvenience was experienced by the householders, but it at times seriously affected the capacity of the sewers into which the flood water gained access.

The ditch into which the sewage works effluent is discharged was widened and thoroughly cleaned out, and the tail races of Mills and the main river bordering the Sewage Pumping Station and other portions of waterway over which the Corporation have control were thoroughly dredged and cleaned out during the year. Similar cleansing was performed by other persons interested in conjunction with the work carried out by the Corporation, and a distinct improvement both in appearance and capacity of the waterways has been effected.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

The Township, except in a few isolated cases, is on the water carriage system. Efforts are being made to ensure that each dwelling has its own sanitary accommodation.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The service is covered by Direct Labour in the portion covered by the boundaries of the old Borough, and by Contract in the Added Area. Horse transport is used in both cases. All premises are visited once per week, and in certain cases, where the volume of refuse is heavy, the visits are more frequent. During the year very careful investigation into the present costs

and mode of collection has been made, and the Corporation came to the conclusion it would be more economical and improvement in collection would be effected, if the whole area was to be dealt with by direct labour and substituting mechanical transport in place of the horse transport and 'Contract' service at present used. It is anticipated that this change will occur at the start of the new financial year subject to the necessary formalities having been dealt with.

All the highways are subject to weekly cleansing, the Main Roads being cleansed by arrangement with the County Council who contribute towards the cost.

The refuse collected is taken to the Refuse Disposal Works situated in Budd's Lane. Tins, etc., are separated and sold. The remainder of the refuse is burnt in the incinerator. Generally the arrangements are satisfactory.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Systematic inspection of the District has been carried out as often as possible, and individual complaints received immediate attention.

The total number of Sanitary Inspections amounted to 765 and 141 nuisances and defects were discovered. The number of nuisances abated was 101 and 86 Informal Notices were served. The 40 nuisances not complied with concerned dilapidated conditions of dwelling houses, and subsequent action under the Housing Act was taken to deal with these cases.

FUMIGATION.

During the year 17 fumigations were carried out after cases of Infectious Disease. The Local Authority provide applicants with Sanitary Fluid and powder where cases of infectious disease arise.

SHOPS.

Informal Action was taken in one case regarding sanitary conveniences and cleanliness under the provisions of the Shops Act, 1934, which was complied with.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No complaints were received during the year. The Borough has very few factories. Smoke abatement action is in the hands of the Police.

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

Bathing for Members of the male sex, has, for a great number of years, taken place in a portion of the Fishlake Stream towards the upper reaches

of the Town. The river is continually flowing—the source of supply being the River Test. A screen was erected and the bed of the stream was always kept in a perfectly clean state. Unfortunately a difference has arisen between the Corporation and the riparian owners and bathing at this point has been temporarily suspended.

During the year Mr. and Mrs. Crosfield, of Embley Park, Romsey, offered to defray the whole cost of constructing an up-to-date Swimming Pool to commemorate the Coronation Year of Their Majesties King George VI. and Queen Elizabeth. This offer was very gratefully accepted by the Corporation and works of construction were started in August. The pool should be completed and available in a few months time at a cost of over £3,000. It will have a capacity of 90,000 gallons, and an up-to-date water purification plant is being installed for treating the water in the pool to a purity as laid down in the latest specification of the Ministry of Health.

From a Public Health point of view the provision of a properly equipped pool will be helpful in improving the physical condition of the inhabitants, and this most generous gift will be in many other ways very greatly appreciated.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

Number of Council Houses found to be infected	...	...	—
Other houses ditto	...	...	2

The method employed for freeing infected houses is by

- (1) Fumigation with Cyanide.
- (2) By removing portions of woodwork and spraying with insecticide together with fumigation.

The method employed for ensuring that the belongings of tenants are free from vermin before removal to Council Houses is for an issue of disinfectants so that the people can clean all their belongings. An inspection to ensure freedom from vermin is then made. Verminous articles are destroyed, and all articles sprayed with insecticide together with fumigation.

Disinfection work is carried out by the Local Authority, but when cyanide is used such method is placed in the hands of Specialist Contractors.

Cyanide fumigation was not used during the year.

SCHOOLS.

An efficient system of supervision ensuring good and proper sanitary conditions on School premises was invariably met with. Water supplies for

all purposes are direct from the mains of high pressure character, affording abundant and pure deliveries. Conditions were found to be uniformly good.

Romsey Council Junior Playing Ground is very small.

Section D. Housing.

NEW BUILDINGS AND HOUSING.

Plans for the provision for a total of 24 houses were approved during the year, 13 of which were completely erected. 18 others approved and started in previous years were completed in 1937.

The Corporation did not erect any new dwellings, but consideration has been given for a further building scheme and negotiations for the acquisition of the necessary land have been opened up together with a preparation of plans.

Attention has been directed during the year to Slum and dilapidated properties in need of repair and demolition. Owing to accommodation not being available in Council Houses displacements of persons from condemned properties has been somewhat retarded, only 19 persons being rehoused during the year. This brings the total to 265 persons displaced from slum properties to Council Houses built for the purpose out of a total of 267.

1. *Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:—*

(1)	(a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ..	169
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	264
(2)	(a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under subhead (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1935 ..	54
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	54
(3)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	20
(4)		Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be fit in all respects for human habitation	55

2. *Remedy of Defects during the Year without service of formal Notices:—*

Number of dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	23
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3. *Action under Statutory Powers during the Year:—*

(a)—Proceedings under Sections 17, 18, and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930:—

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	—
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—				
	(a) By Owners	...	...	...	—
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners				—

(b)—Proceedings under the Public Health Acts:—

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring defects to be remedied				17
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal Notices:—				
	(a) By Owners	...	...	...	17
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners				—

(c) Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930:—

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were served	...	...	...	9
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	...	21

(d) Proceedings under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930:—

(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...			—
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	...			—

4. *Housing Act, 1935—Overcrowding.*

(a)	(1)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at end of year	...		16
	(2)	Number of families dwelling therein	...	...	16
	(3)	Number of persons dwelling therein	...	...	90
(b)		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	8

(1)	Number of overcrowded cases relieved during the year	15
(2)	Number of persons concerned in such cases ...	86½

I express the hope that the foregoing particulars cover the whole of the information required for the report for 1937.

I am, Sir,

Yours obediently,

ARTHUR A. SMITH,

Borough Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

To Dr. G. TATE

Section E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

- (a) *Part IV. (Health and Inspection of Cattle), Milk and Dairies Order, 1926.*

The Veterinary Surgeon's Report for 1937.

ALMA HOUSE,

ROMSEY, HAMPSHIRE.

18th June, 1938,

Borough of Romsey.

Inspection and Supervision of Foods.

A.—Milk Supply. Under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk Shop Orders, I continue to inspect all Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk Shops in the Borough with regard to drainage, lighting, ventilation and water supply.

48 inspections were made during the year 1937.

There are about 100 cows in the Borough of Romsey.

Other arrangements having been made for the collection of samples of milk from the various retailers and milk supplied to the Schools, I no longer carry out these duties for the County Medical Officer.

B.—Meat. As Meat Inspector, I continue to inspect regularly all slaughter houses in the Borough, and all animals slaughtered or intended for slaughter, as to their fitness for human consumption, that I may find on the premises.

There are eight licensed slaughter-houses, but no public slaughter-house in the Borough.

During the year 1937 a total of about 800 inspections were made, and just under 4,000 animals were inspected, dead or alive.

I inspect all stalls (if any), shops, stores and vehicles.

W. F. MAYNARD,
M.R.C.V.S.

Food and Drugs Act.

Under the Food and Drugs Act, the County Council Inspectors have taken the following samples in the Borough during the year :—

New Milk 16. All were satisfactory.

Section F.

Where cases cannot be satisfactorily nursed at home they are admitted by arrangement to the Southampton Isolation Hospital. The admission of Senior and other children to Romsey Schools from different areas of the Rural District and young adults working in a nearby town has rendered the control of infectious disease more difficult.

There were 5 cases of Diphtheria, one age 3, one age 11 and three adults. Two of the cases were severe. None of the cases had been immunised. Immunisation probably accounts for the large proportion of adults.

Immunisation against Diphtheria.—83 children were immunised during the year. Total number immunised since 1933, 783. There were 11 cases of Scarlet Fever. One severe and the rest of a mild type. Two cases were sent to Hospital.

There were 35 cases of Chicken Pox and there was an epidemic of Influenza in January.

There was an epidemic of Jaundice during the last few months of the year. It chiefly affected school children. The disease spread to other children in the family and to children living near by. Prolonged contact appeared to be necessary. It did not spread to children attending the schools from the rural district for some months. Most of the cases were mild—one child had blood in the stools. A few adults were affected.

The disease in many cases began with abdominal pain in the left side and extended to the right and then vomiting ensued. Jaundice appeared in many cases on the third day after the inset of symptoms. The stools generally became pale shortly before the onset of Jaundice.

The incubation period appeared to be about 7 days though in one case it appeared to be 14 days. The duration of illness averaged about 3 weeks. In some cases the Jaundice appeared without any apparent previous symptoms.

Notifiable Diseases during 1937.

Disease.	Age Periods.												T't'l to Hosp.	Deaths.
	un. 1 year.	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20	35	45	65		
Scarlet Fever ...			1			6	2	1		1			11	2
Diphtheria ...				1			1	1	1	1			5	2
Puerperal Pyrexia									2				2	
Chicken-Pox ...	1	1		1	4	2	1	7					35	

CANCER.

Deaths—Male 4. Female 7. The average number of deaths from Cancer for the last 10 years is 8.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1937.

Age Period.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1								
5				1				
15	1							
25	1	1				1		
35	1							
45	1				1			
55					1			
65								
Totals ...	4	1		1	2	1		

Ratio of Non-notified Tuberculosis Deaths to total Tuberculosis Deaths, o.
Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations:—

There was no action under these Regulations, no case to which they apply having been met with, nor was there any case for action under the Public Health Act, 1925, sec. 62.

Maternity and Child Welfare work is done by the staff of the County Authority.

TABLE.

CAUSES OF DEATH.					Males	Females.
All Causes	...	...	...	...	39	33
Influenza	...	...	...	...	—	1
Tuberculosis Respiratory	...	...	...	...	2	1
Tuberculosis Other	...	...	...	...	1	—
Cancer	...	...	...	...	4	7
Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	1
Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	8	11
Aneurysm	...	...	...	...	1	—
Other Circulatory	...	...	...	...	3	3
Other Respiratory	...	...	...	...	1	—
Cirrhosis Liver	...	...	...	...	2	—
Other Digestive	...	...	...	...	1	—
Nephritis	...	...	...	...	2	2
Congenital Debility, Premature Birth, etc.	...	...	...	...	3	—
Senility	...	...	...	...	1	4
Other Violence	...	...	...	...	5	1
Other Defined	...	...	...	...	5	2
Diarrhoea 2 years or over	...	...	...	...	1	—

Six copies of this report will be duly forwarded to the Ministry of Health, one copy to the Home Office and one copy to the County Medical Officer as soon as printed.

Yours faithfully,
G. TATE,
Medical Officer of Health.

